

The Hong Kong Daily Press.

No. 5122 號二十百一千五第 日二初月三年戌甲治員 HONGKONG, FRIDAY, 17th APRIL, 1874. 五拜禮 號七十月四英 港香 [PRICE \$2 PER MONTH.]

Arrivals.

April 16, CANDELARIA, Spanish bark, 407, M. Barredo, Iloilo 20th March, General Barredo & Co.
April 16, T.M.S. GARDNER, 454, Commander Wolcott, Singapore 25th March, and Labuan 2nd April.
April 16, RAPID, Siam bark, 429, F. Hunter, Bangkok 2nd March, Rice—Crispin.
April 16, AMOR, British str., 314, Smith, Puttuck, General—Srinivas & Co.
April 16, DANUBE, Brit. str., 561, Hopkins, Bangkok 7th April, General—Srinivas & Co.
April 16, CRO, German bark, 318, Obergr, Sydney 15th February, 300 tons Coal—ARNOLD, KARRING & Co.
April 16, REAGATA, British str., 607, Harrison, Newchwang 8th April, General—Srinivas & Co.
April 16, BENJAMIN-CUMMINGS, Amer. bk., 504, Russell Brown, Whaling Cruise, 24th December, Spinn Oil—CAPTAIN.

Departures.

April 16, H.C.M. gun-boat CHEN-RO, for a
April 16, AVON, str., for Bombay, &c.
April 16, AMOR, str., for Shanghai.
April 16, FINE, str., for Hongkong.
April 16, CHOW, str., for Bangkok.

Clearances.

At the Harbour Master's Office,
April 16th.
Lord of the Isles, str., for Shanghai.
Flying Eagle, for Iloilo.

Passengers.

For Benjamin-Cummings, from a Whaling Cruise—
Mr. Brown and 2 children.
For Rapid, from Bangkok—
2 Chinese.
For Danube, str., from Bangkok—
Mr. Edward Bonerillo and 80 Chinese.

Reports.

The Spanish bark *Candelaria* reports left Iloilo on 20th March. From Luzon Coast had calms and N.E. wind throughout.

M.S. Gardner reports left Singapore at 5 p.m., on 25th March, and arrived at Labuan at 11 a.m., on the 2nd instant; experienced fine warm weather until the 13th instant, when they found the N.E. wind increased to a gale of wind, and had to leave very early.

The Siam bark *Rapid* reports left Bangkok on 2nd March; had moderate light breeze throughout the passage till the 12th, when it was increased to a gale of wind, and had to leave very early.

The British steamship *Amor* reports left Puttuck on 7th April; had light S.W. wind, and a very heavy sea. When abreast of the Lema the blades of the propeller were carried away, striking the engine, and the ship was obliged to stop. The steamship *Rapida* came up, and with some difficulty took the *Amor* in tow, and brought her back to Hongkong.

The British steamship *Danube* reports left Bangkok on 7th April; had light S.W. wind, and a very heavy sea. When abreast of the Lema the blades of the propeller were carried away, striking the engine, and the ship was obliged to stop. The steamship *Rapida* came up, and with some difficulty took the *Danube* in tow, and brought her back to Hongkong.

The German bark *Cro* reports left Sydney on 15th February; had light S.E. wind, and a very heavy sea. When abreast of the Lema the blades of the propeller were carried away, striking the engine, and the ship was obliged to stop. The steamship *Rapida* came up, and with some difficulty took the *Cro* in tow, and brought her back to Hongkong.

The British steamship *Reagata* reports left Newchwang on 8th April; had light S.W. wind, and a very heavy sea. When abreast of the Lema the blades of the propeller were carried away, striking the engine, and the ship was obliged to stop. The steamship *Rapida* came up, and with some difficulty took the *Reagata* in tow, and brought her back to Hongkong.

SHANGHAI SHIPPING.

March 20th, Albert Victor, from Fremantle; 28th, Adelaide, (arrival from Hongkong); 29th, Gifford, from Champion Bay; 30th, June, from Bangkok; Wildwood, from Burra's Inlet; April 1st, Sampson, from Newcastle; 2nd, Washington, from Tientsin; 3rd, Whitehall, from Sydney; 4th, from Singapore.

March 25th, Adelaide, for Hongkong; 26th, Albert Victor, for Hongkong; 27th, Gifford, for Hongkong; 28th, June, for Hongkong; 29th, Wildwood, for Hongkong; 30th, Sampson, for Hongkong; 1st, Washington, for Hongkong; 2nd, Whitehall, for Hongkong; 3rd, from Sydney; 4th, from Singapore.

Vessels Expected at Hongkong.

(Corrected to Date.)
From, Date.
Siam, 18th.
Derwent, 19th.
Antipodes, 19th.
Batavia, 19th.
Johns, 19th.
Kate, 19th.
Lydia, 19th.
Okeana, 19th.
Bosnia, 19th.
Deception, 19th.
Okeana, 19th.
Avon, 19th.
Tangora, 19th.
Saffers, 19th.
Deception, 19th.
Leonora, 19th.
Frank N. Thayer, 19th.
Albion, 19th.
Pile, 19th.
Golden Spar, 19th.
Elizabeth, 19th.
Tehthoff, 19th.
Walrika, 19th.
Frank, 19th.
G. T. Pearson, 19th.
Houliou, 19th.
Sylvia, 19th.
Courier, 19th.
Hongkong, 19th.
Glaucus, 19th.
Arauc, 19th.
Star of China, 19th.
Warrior, 19th.
Golden Castle, 19th.
Rennie, 19th.

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necessitate their being so numerous that it would cost more to collect the tax than it was worth. By laying extra heavy charges upon any junk which has left the port without paying such duties and subjecting them to annoyance and delay, it is made worth the while of all to pay the regular amount in Hongkong. They find it better before leaving to "beat the toll" than to have the system after a time gets into good working order, and the duties are paid with perfect regularity.

This plan of action affects very materially to the powers of the native officials of Hongkong, and the course adopted is the more pernicious because the taxes are not paid out of any difficulty which may arise by declaring that the farmer has exceeded the limits of his authority, and that they are in no way concerned in his illegal acts. The only way, therefore, of dealing with the matter is to strike against those who levy the duties in the Colony, and no pains ought to be spared by the local authorities in hunting them out and closing their offices. That they are acting illegally can we think hardly be doubted, when the exact nature of their proceedings is understood. The so-called duties which they levy differ in toto from the kind of duties with which Europeans are familiar as forming the maritime revenue of a state. They are levied under a system of farm, and so far as the Chinese officials are concerned the duty is paid or provided for in advance by the farmer—so that the tax is not a state tax, but in the stage at which it has arrived when steps are taken to levy it, it is a mere matter of personal gain to the farmer who, as above stated, the Mandarin will not hold to be justified in levying it either directly or indirectly in this Colony. In theory, it is an import duty at the port to which the junks may be bound, but in practice, it becomes nothing more nor less than an Export duty from Hongkong—and it is beyond doubt illegal for anybody to levy an export duty here without the sanction of the Government.

The real force of the action is to be found in the coercive measures used by the revenue cruisers upon those junks who leave the Colony without either paying the squeeze or, what amounts to the same thing, arranging to pay it at their destination. If the men who collect these duties or grant the clearance chops, came up to a junkman and said: "Look here, Mr. Junkman, I am connected with the farmer of the revenues for such and such a district, and if you do not pay me so much, I will stop your vessel by force," no one would doubt that he was carrying the junkman into payment of a tax in a completely illegal manner. What he practically does say to the junkman is: "If you do not pay me or arrange with me to pay at your destination such or such a tax, my friends, the revenue cruisers who are just over yonder outside the limits of the port will stop your vessel by force"—a threat which differs so far from the one which is clearly illegal that it is difficult at first to perceive the difference. The distinction lies, of course, in the fact that the force used by the revenue cruisers would be legal in the place and at the time when it was used, but it would be a promise to suspend its operation for a temporary consideration, becomes illegal here, as it is obviously precisely the same thing, practically, as if the cruisers came into the harbor to collect the duties on the junks before they started. It is just the same whether a man says to another: "If you do not pay me ten pounds, I will take your life," or "If you pay me ten pounds, I will arrange with Bill Sykes, and his friends round the corner, who will kill everybody concerning whom I do not speak to them, to let you pass."

We are informed that the names of two of the officers in Hongkong established for the levy of duties in the above named manner have been discovered, and that a receipt for duty levied in the manner above described is in the hands of a gentleman in this Colony. If the information is correct, steps ought assuredly to be taken to put down at least this branch of the squeezing now going on in the Colony; which is undoubtedly the most pernicious, because the most regular and the most difficult for the resident traders in the Colony to evade.

Either the Commission or the Government should at once exert themselves to ascertain how and where this taxation is conducted. Our information is to the effect that two Chinese Hongks have been discovered collecting respectively a tax on Opium and the Canton Lefin tax, and if it is possible for private individuals to get hold of receipts for these taxes, it ought surely to be within the power of the Police, with all the means which they have, or ought to have, at their disposal for finding out such matters, to discover where the taxing officers are.

It is announced that Sub-Lieutenant Master of the Old Engineer, who has been appointed to the post of collector of duties which were formerly levied by some tax collector on Chinese territory. This ingenious explanation was curiously enough accepted, and beyond a statement that the matter was a "diplomatic question," the public heard no more on the subject. The view which was taken was the more striking, because some years before, on a similar office being brought to light through the columns of this paper, Sir RICHARD MACDONNELL threatened the man with prosecution, and the establishment was closed up a day after it was discovered.

The *modus operandi* which was shown to exist in the case of the Salt taxing office was precisely that which is generally adopted by the Agents of the Native officials for collecting revenue in the Colony. If a tax is paid here by a junk clearing out in advance, a paper is handed to the master which enables him to pass the customs stations and cruises; but unless he complies with the regulations and provides himself with such a document, which is a *quasi* Customs clearance, he is subjected to all the annoyance of being overhauled by the cruisers so soon as he leaves the limits of the harbor. His "convenience" is not by his being permitted to pay his squeeze in Hongkong instead of being pulled up after he has left; but the person who his convenience is very simple and considerably convenient, is very simple and considerably convenient to the collectors of the tax, as they are thus able to lay it upon a large number who would escape the vigilance of the cruisers of

the trade of Hongkong was appointed, we called attention to the necessity of endeavoring if possible to discover where and how duties were being levied actually in the Colony, as this point is intimately mixed up with the question of the direct action of the cruisers, and is one with

